
CHAPTER 5.0

STRATEGIC TRAIL SYSTEM CONCEPTS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In establishing a Trail System Concept that would best meet the challenges and issues that could confront a Trail Program, the Board will need to balance the overall needs for a successful County Trail System with specific issues relating to trail implementation. These Trail System Concepts are intended to present options for structuring a Trail Program focused on conditions in San Diego County. Both options provide a different level of service and have different levels of costs associated with their implementation. The Trail System Concepts provided here utilize the broad conclusions and recommendations that were developed in the previous chapters as the foundation for each concept. Both of the following Trail System Concepts could be implemented with varying degrees of success at achieving these overall recommendations related to needs, opportunities, constraints, and financial considerations.

Many possible Trail System Concepts were reviewed and analyzed. However, only two concepts appeared to provide the best opportunity for future implementation. Both of these concepts provide a different strategy for implementing a Trail Program and are identified by the following general descriptions:

- \$ Concept 1: New County Trail Program/Policy – Trails on Public and Private Lands
- \$ Concept 2: New County Trail Program/Policy – Trails on Public Lands Only

The primary differences between each concept are twofold. The concepts either use public lands only, or a combination of public and private lands for trail implementation. Each concept defines a general strategy and provides a list of recommendations for the future Trail Program. Each of the concepts, strategies, and recommendations could then be used to carry-out or implement the goals, policies and objectives within the General Plan to support that particular concept. It is anticipated that the Board of Supervisors will select one of the concepts provided within this chapter. This selected concept will then be the basis for the final Trail System Concept for inclusion into the General Plan 2020 update. Also provided in this chapter are possible Implementation Models and Management Structure Models for the Trail Program. The Board will also need to select one of each of these models to accompany the Trail Program Concept. A brief description and summary of each Trail Program Concept, Implementation Model, and Management Structure Model is provided below:

5.1.1 Trail Program Concepts

Concept 1: New County Trail Program and Policy – Trails on Public and Private Lands

Concept 1 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program **involving both public and private lands**. This new Trail Program would be described in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. It would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies. A summary of this concept is illustrated in Table 5-1. The County would be responsible for the planning and implementation of Regional and Community Trails. The individual community planning/sponsor groups would take the lead in developing preliminary Community Trail Maps and customizing implementation features needed for their area. The communities would work closely with the County toward the eventual approval and adoption of these local trail maps.

Concept 2: New County Trail Program and Policy – Trails on Public Lands Only

Concept 2 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program **involving only available public land**. This new Trail Program would be described in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. This would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies. A summary of this concept is illustrated in Table 5-2. Again, in this concept the County would be responsible for the planning and implementation of Regional and Community Trails. The individual community planning/sponsor groups would take the lead in developing preliminary Community Trail Maps and customizing implementation features needed for their area. The communities would work closely with the County toward the eventual approval and adoption of these local trail maps.

Alternative Concepts:

Many alternative program concepts were reviewed and explored. One such alternative was to utilize the existing General Plan Trail Program and implementation features with refinements and modifications that offered a somewhat improved Trail Program. However, the refinements became so numerous and broad in order for the program to function properly that in the end the approach was extremely similar to Concept 1. In the final analysis, providing this as an alternative concept had no specific merit that wasn't already being proposed by Concept 1. Another consideration was to evaluate the existing Trail Program without any modifications. However, this was determined to be taking a step backwards in that the Board of Supervisors already recognized that the existing program was not adequately functioning as demonstrated by authorizing this Trail System Assessment and development of the trail strategic plan. Many other ideas were explored and those ideas that had merit ended up being incorporated as options within the proposed concepts.

Table 5-1: Summary of Concept 1

<i>GENERAL CONCEPTS</i>	<i>OPTIONS</i>	<i>GOALS AND POLICIES NEEDED</i>
<p>CONCEPT 1:</p> <p><i>NEW COUNTY PROGRAM / POLICY</i></p> <p><i>TRAILS ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS</i></p> <p>Concept 1 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program involving both public and private lands. This new Trail Program would be described in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan.</p> <p>The General Plan would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct future trails on existing county public lands such as parks, open space preserves and /or within the MSCP. • Locate trails (pathways) within public road rights-of-way. • Possibly develop joint use agreements with public agencies and locate trails within existing utility easements where possible • Purchase additional lands or trail easements from willing property owners. • Obtain gifts for trail easements from private property owners. • Request mandatory dedication of trail easements from private properties when County approval is requested for development projects. • Establish development fees or assessment districts (CSA) for the acquisition and maintenance of trails on public or private lands. • Include volunteer efforts, non-profit organizations, and/or land trust involvement for trail implementation. 	<p>Prepare a Trail Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Trail Program in the Public Facility Element of the General Plan. • Establish a Trail Master Plan that defines connectivity and usability. • Prioritize Trail Alignments. • Implement a Trail Plan that reflects population patterns. • Continue a surveying process that confirms trail needs. • Provide a variety of trail experiences. <p>Establish Trails Sensitive to Land Uses and Environmental Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acquire private lands only to insure the completion of Regional and Community Trails. • Minimize impacts to Private Property. • Address Environmental Impacts. • Minimize impacts to Agricultural Lands. <p>Implementation of Trail Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to allow volunteer groups to participate. • Continue to indemnify all persons granting easements. • Establish multiple alternatives for trail acquisitions. • Continue and expand mandatory dedication and provide associated Nexus findings. • Amend the current PLDO credit to accommodate trail dedication. • Establish an “Adopt a Trail” program. <p>Effectively Maintain and Operate the Trail Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement management plan and strategy. • Assign responsibility to a County Department. • Provide adequate staff and resources to meet programmatic needs. • Establish a variety of funding mechanisms for trail acquisition, implementation, and maintenance. • Prepare trail criteria (size, type, configuration). • Encourage volunteer groups to provide trail support.

Table 5-2: Summary of Concept 2

<i>GENERAL CONCEPTS</i>	<i>OPTIONS</i>	<i>GOALS AND POLICIES NEEDED</i>
<p>CONCEPT 2:</p> <p><i>NEW COUNTY PROGRAM / POLICY</i></p> <p><i>TRAILS ON PUBLIC LANDS ONLY</i></p> <p>Concept 2 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program involving only available public lands. This new Trail Program would be described in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan</p> <p>The General Plan would contain the vision of the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construct future trails on existing county public lands such as parks, open space preserves and /or within the MSCP. • Locate trails (pathways) in public road rights-of-way. • Possibly develop joint use agreements with public agencies. • Purchase additional lands or trail easements from <u>willing property owners</u>. • Obtain <u>gifts</u> for trail easements from private property owners. • Establish development fees or assessment districts (CSA) for the operations and maintenance of trails on public lands. • Retain existing trails on private lands. • Include volunteer efforts, non-profit organizations, and/or land trust involvement for trail implementation. 	<p>Prepare a Trail Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a Trail Program in the Public Facility Element of the General Plan. • Establish a Trail Master Plan that defines connectivity and usability for Regional and Community Trails. • Prioritize Trail Alignments. • Implement a trail plan that reflects population patterns for Community Trail Plan. • Continue a surveying process that confirms trail needs. • Provide a variety of trail experience. • Review and revise the current General Plan/Board Policy I-116. <p>Establish Trails Sensitive to Land Uses and Environmental Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use lands for trails within public ownership. • Provide trail routes that respect the rights of adjacent property owners. • Minimize and address environmental impacts. • Minimize impacts to agricultural lands. <p>Implementation of Trail Program</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to allow volunteer groups to participate. • Continue to indemnify all persons granting easements or private landowners adjacent to trails. • Establish multiple alternatives for trail acquisition. • Establish priority list for trail implementation. • Establish an “Adopt a Trail” program. <p>Effectively Maintain and Operate the Trail Program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement management plan and strategy. • Assign responsibility to a County Department. • Assign adequate staff and resources. • Establish a variety of funding mechanisms for trail acquisition, implementation, and maintenance. • Prepare trail criteria (size, type, configuration). • Encourage volunteer groups to provide trail support.

Summary of Trail System Concepts Matrix

The primary difference between the two (2) Trail System Concepts is the ability to use either public or private lands for trail implementation. A Summary Matrix of the Trail System Concepts was prepared to aid in determining which concept had the best probability for providing a quality trail system that provides a high level of service. The matrix provides an overview of the recommendations for trails that were outlined in the previous chapters of this Trail System Assessment. The recommendations provided earlier were narrowed down to several important recommendations. These were determined to be the most critical for a successful overall trail system depending if the concept utilized only public, or public and private land. Many of the other recommendations discussed in the report, but not used in the matrix, would have an equal opportunity for success with any of the Trail System Concepts. Below is a brief explanation for each of the selected recommendations.

- **Trail Experience:** It is important for the County to provide the trail users with a high quality trail experience and expand on the variety of trail experiences within the trail system. This would include urban/suburban, rural, and wilderness trails. Pathways (within public road rights-of-way) provide a vastly different experience that is less desirable for most trail users and are not considered equal substitutes for trails.
- **Trail Connectivity:** Trails that connect and form longer trails, and offer greater variety and opportunity for use are important components for future trail planning efforts. This concept of connectivity would be limited without incorporating some trails within private property.
- **Linking Community Resources:** Trails should allow the opportunity for residents to access community resources (schools, community centers, parks, libraries, historical resources, etc.) without relying upon automobiles for transportation.
- **User Needs-Regional:** Regional Trail needs are based on the ability for the candidate Regional Trails to connect to existing and proposed regional “type” trails and provide long distance trail opportunities. Regional Trails may be required to cross both private as well as public lands in order to make these connections possible.
- **User Needs-Community:** Community Trail needs may vary greatly from one community to another and there should be flexibility in planning to allow for regular community input and a variety of implementation options. Most existing Community Trails are within private lands and minimal public lands are currently available for trails.

-
- **Trail Acquisition:** The process for acquiring property for trails will vary depending upon whether trails are limited to public only or public and private lands. When trails on private property are considered, the process would be more involved and somewhat more complicated (i.e. mandatory dedication, nexus findings, etc.).
 - **Costs for Trail Acquisition:** Acquisition costs would also relate to the use of private property for some trails, as this would potentially add an acquisition cost that would be avoided if trails were only constructed on public property.
 - **Minimal Impacts to Private Property:** Again the primary factor relating to impacts to private property would be whether trails are allowed on private as well as public property.
 - **Minimal Impacts to Agricultural Land:** Agricultural land is a type of private property and is given a separate category for rating primarily because of the large amount of agricultural lands within the county and the past desires of the agricultural community to specifically be involved in the trail planning process.

The rating system of the matrix ranges from low, which indicates that the concept has little or no probability of satisfying the recommendation identified, to high, which has a strong probability of satisfying the recommendation.

Table 5-3 Trail System Concepts Rating

	Categories for Rating	TRAIL SYSTEM CONCEPTS	
		Concept 1	Concept 2
1	Trail Experience	5	1
2	Trail Connectivity	5	1
3	Linking Community Resources	5	2
4	User Needs-Regional	5	1
5	User Needs-Community	5	1
6	Trail Acquisition	3	4
7	Costs for Trail Acquisition	3	5
8	Minimal Impacts to Private Property	1	5
9	Minimal Impacts to Agricultural Land	1	3
	Totals	33	23

Rating System: 1 =Low, concept has low or no probability of satisfying the recommendations outlined
5 =High, concept has a strong probability of satisfying the recommendations outlined

Conclusions-Trail System Concepts Matrix

The matrix provides an overview of several important categories that distinguish the Trail System Concepts. It is important to note that the categories for rating the Trail System Concepts address two separate functions: trail quality and implementation. The first five categories focus more on the quality of the trail experience, which should be a guiding principle for the trail system. The ability for the trail system to provide a high quality trail experience and satisfy both regional and community needs is critical for a successful overall Trail Program. Categories 6 through 9 deal more with the implementation of the trail system that, while an important consideration, has less impact on the users' experience and the qualitative aspects of the trail system. Based on these two separate functions the numerical value of the two concepts could be further apart and rate Concept 1 even higher than is shown in Table 5-3.

5.1.2 Program Implementation Models

The County of San Diego is unique in that there are numerous Community Planning and Sponsor Groups that will be participating in the creation of their Community Trail Maps. The implementation model for the Trail Program will have to provide flexibility in order to accommodate the wide and diverse needs that each group will require. This flexibility will be necessary not only in the creation of the trail maps but also for future modification and updating. There are three (3) Program Implementation Models presented in this chapter. Any of these models could be used to implement the selected Trail Program concept but some models offer unique advantages over others. When selecting the Trail Program implementation model it is important to consider how this model will best fulfill the goals of a Regional and Community Trail System. Below is a brief summary of each model.

Program Implementation Model 1

In this model the new Trail Program would be described in the sub-element of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan (See Figure 5-1). This would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies. Within the Trail Program a Regional Trail Plan and associated design guidelines would be prepared. The General Plan would make reference to a Community Trail Master Plan. The Community Trail Master Plan would be a document approved and adopted by the Board of Supervisors but maintained outside of the General Plan. Placing the Community / Sub-regional Plan Area Trail Maps outside of the General Plan would allow for adjustments, updating, and modifications of the trail maps without requiring a General Plan Amendment. Specific implementation features would be maintained outside of the General Plan.

Program Implementation Model 2

In this model the new Trail Program would be described in the sub-element of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan (See Figure 5-2). The Trail Program would generally describe the vision for the County Trail Program with specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies identified. Reference in the General Plan would be made to the Trail Master Plan. The Trail Master Plan would include the Regional Trails, Community / Sub-regional Planning Area Trail Map and associated design guidelines for both. The Trail Master Plan would be outside of the General Plan allowing for adjustments, updating, and modifications of all maps without requiring a General Plan Amendment. Specific implementation features would be maintained outside of the General Plan.

Program Implementation Model 3

Model 3 would retain the entire Trail Program within the General Plan (See Figure 5-3). All trail mapping and guidelines would remain in the General Plan similar to the existing methodology. The implementation features would be outside of the General Plan.

5.1.3 Management Structure Models

It has been identified in the Trail System Assessment Report that to ensure the initial and continued success of the Trail Program a definitive Management Structure needs to be prepared and put into action. **After reviewing numerous options for the trail management structure, there are only two models deemed most effective.** The following provides a brief overview of the two models that could be used to implement the new Trail Program.

Management Structure Model 1

The management structure for Model 1 recommends that the Trail Program be included within the Department of Parks and Recreation business plan. Review of the Trail Programs of many city, county, and state agencies revealed that the majority are administered by their respective Parks and Recreation Departments. Within the County this department has the most in common with a Trail Program, as most existing county trails are located within public parks and open space preserves. Model 1 recommends a two-step phased implementation for placing the Trail Program within the Department of Parks and Recreation. It recommends that the initial (interim) management (see Figure 5-4) be within an existing business unit (Open Space Management) and the final management (see Figure 5-5) be within its own newly created business unit.

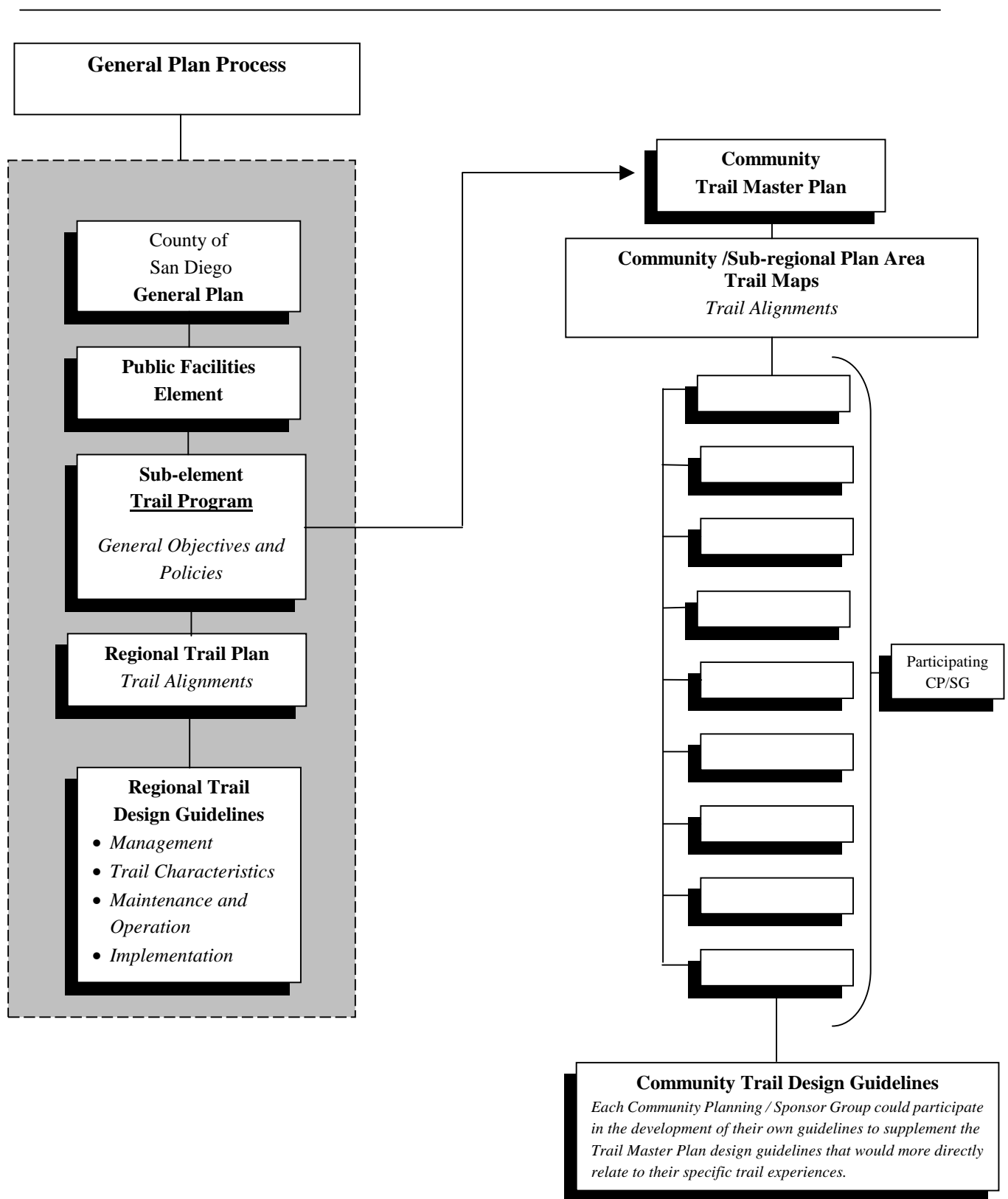


Figure 5-1: Program Implementation Model 1

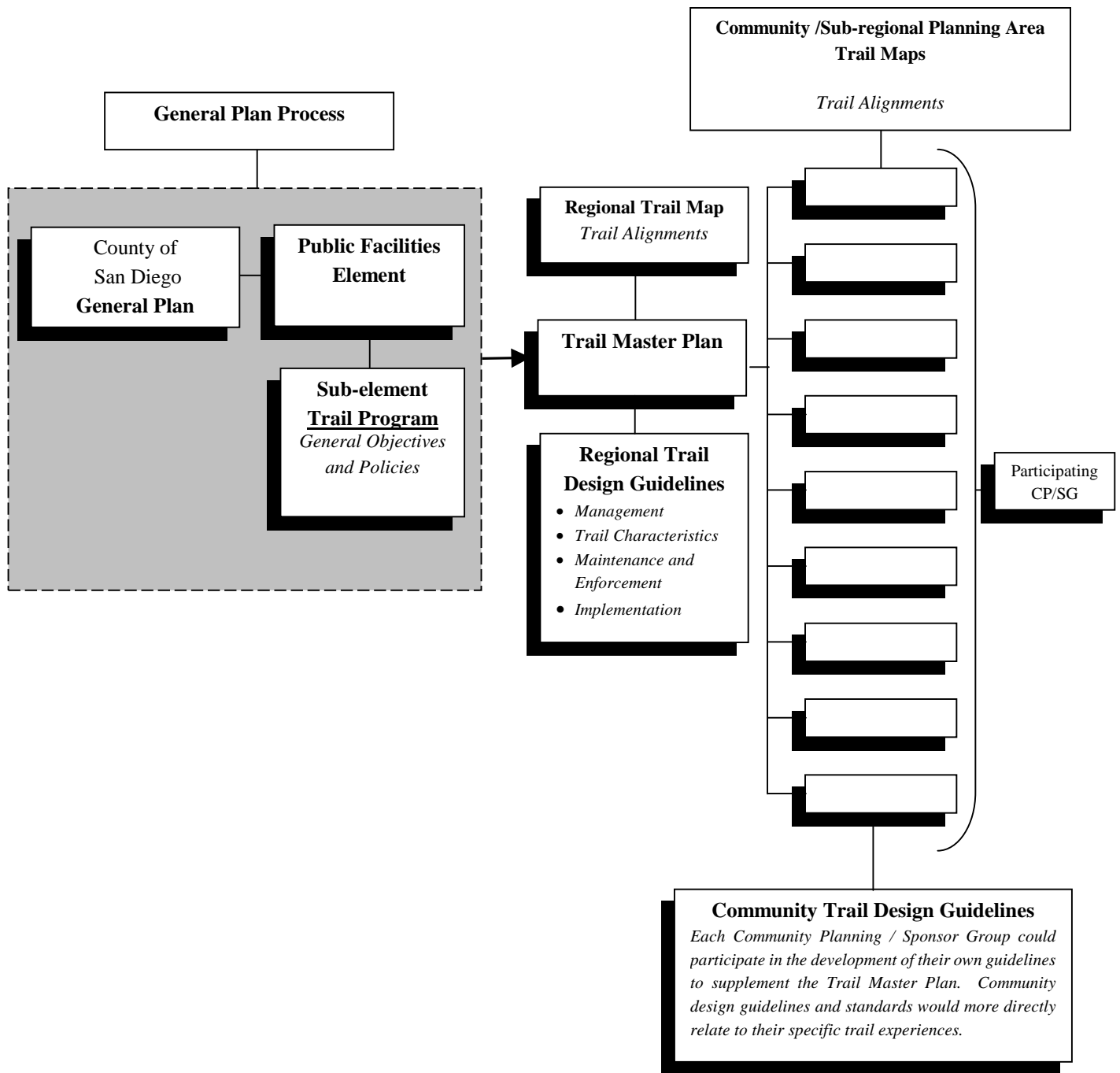


Figure 5-2: Program Implementation Model 2

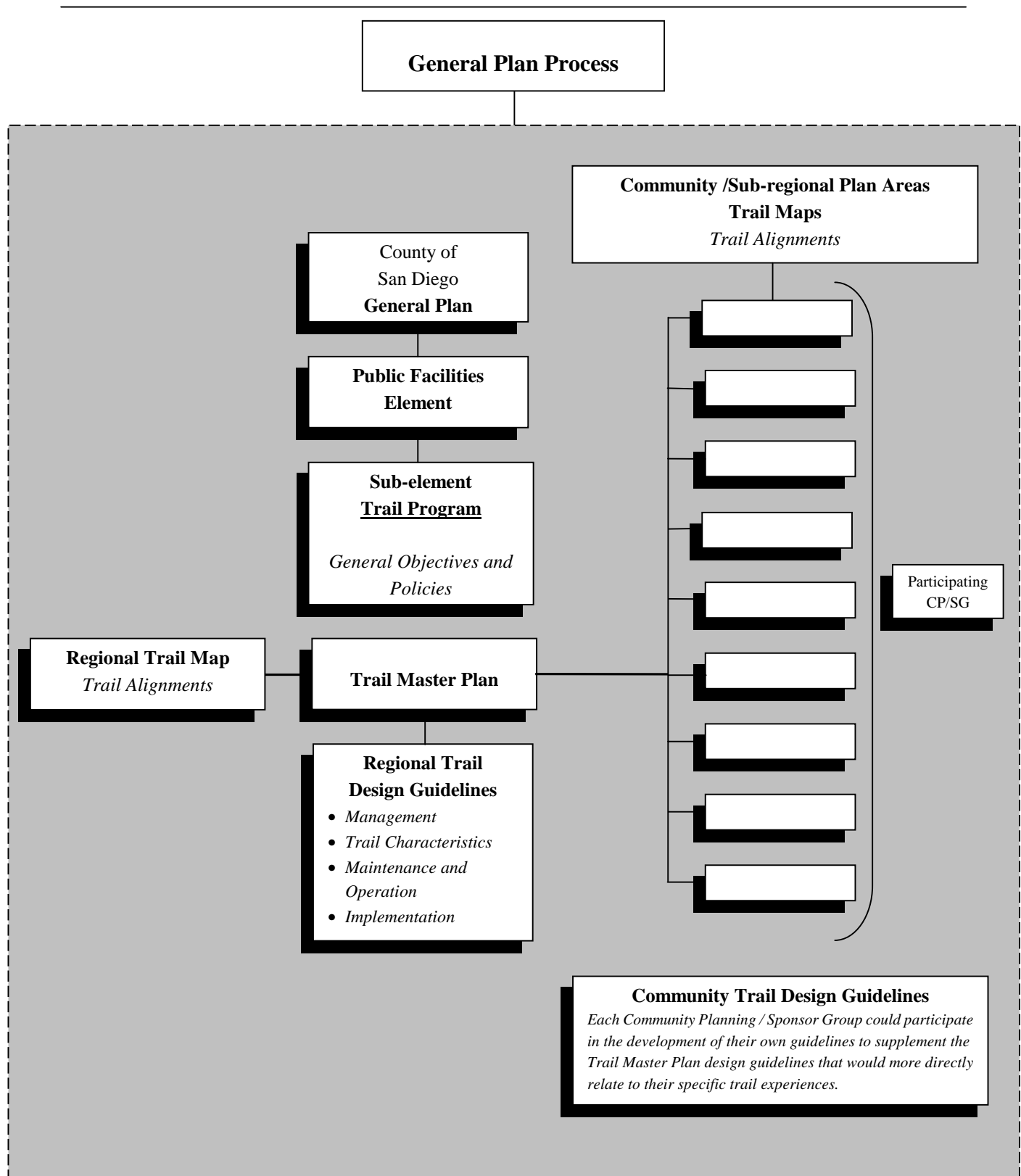


Figure 5-3: Program Implementation Model 3

Management Structure Model 2

The management structure for Model 2 would involve three different County departments. These would include the Department of Parks and Recreation, the Department of Planning and Land Use and the Department of Public Works (Figure 5-6). Each department would be responsible for different elements of the Trail Program.

- The Department of Parks and Recreation would be the lead entity and responsible for the overall implementation, management, and maintenance of all existing and future trails.
- The Department of Planning and Land Use would be responsible for all planning activities related to trails and pathways.
- The Department of Public Works would be responsible for the implementation, management, and maintenance of existing and newly developed pathways that are within public road rights-of-way.

A more detailed discussion is provided in the following pages for each of the Trail Program Concepts, Implementation Models and possible Management Structure Models.

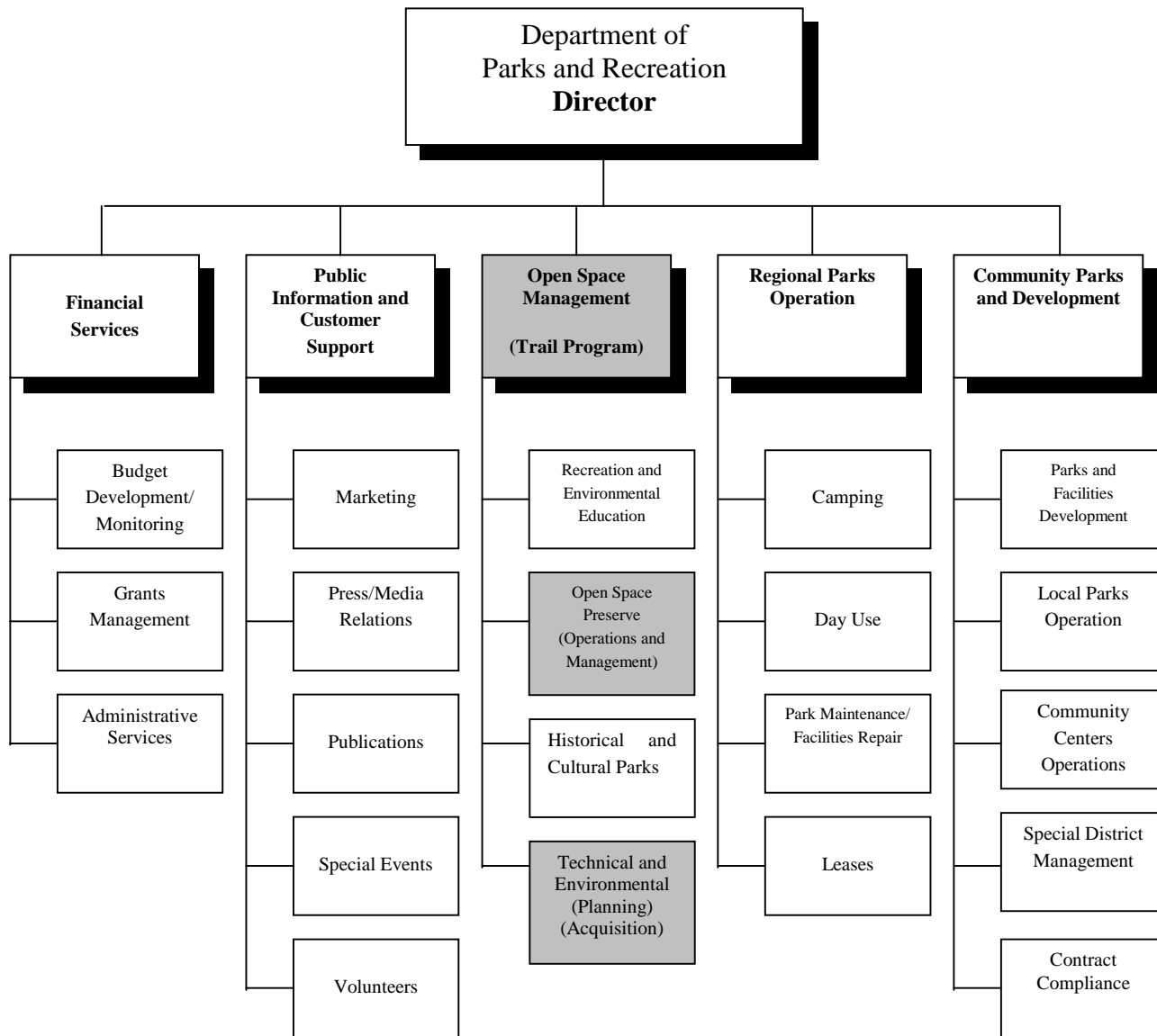


Figure 5-4: Phase 1 - Management Structure Model 1, Interim

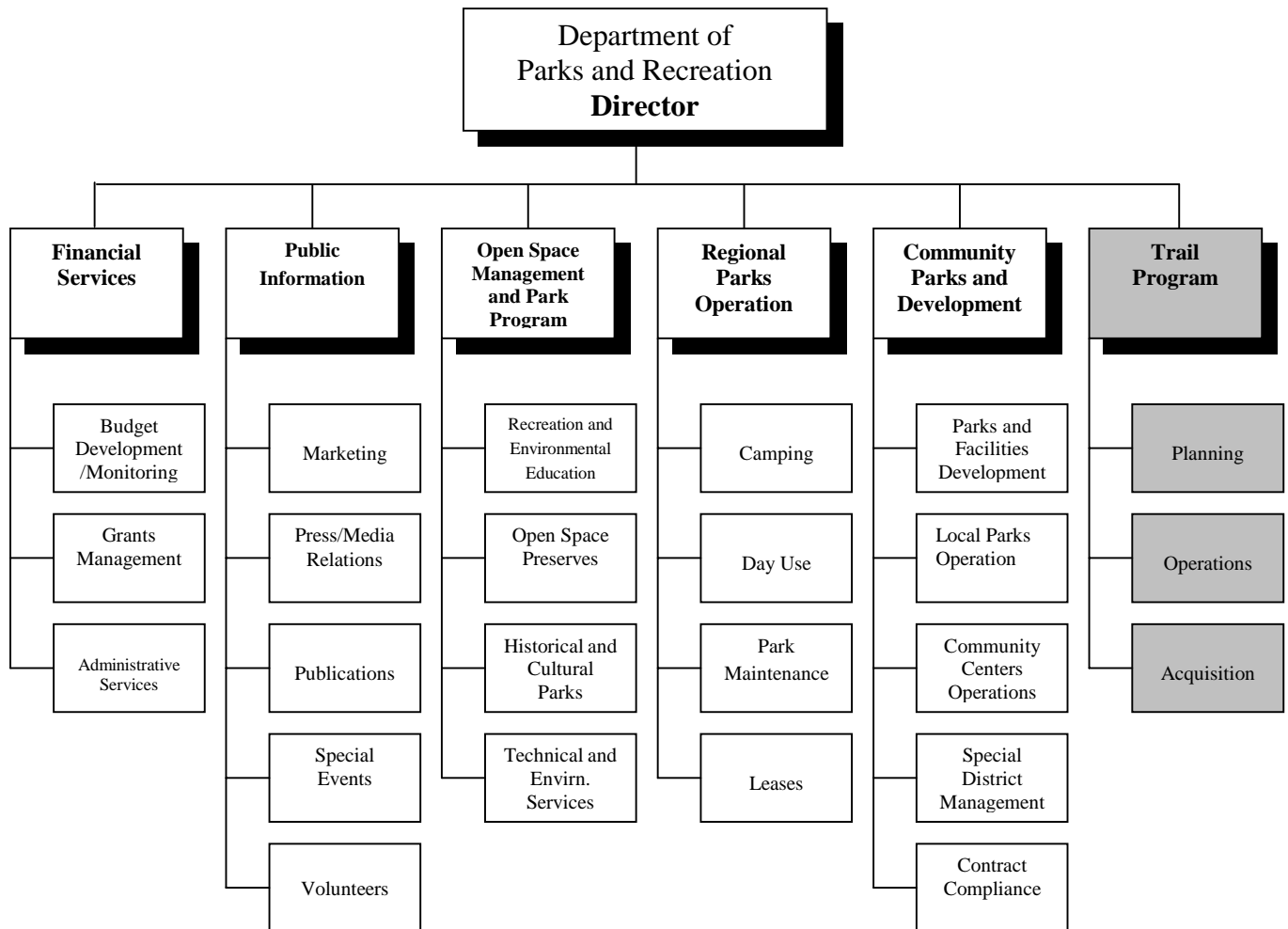


Figure 5-5: Phase 2 - Management Structure Model 1, Final

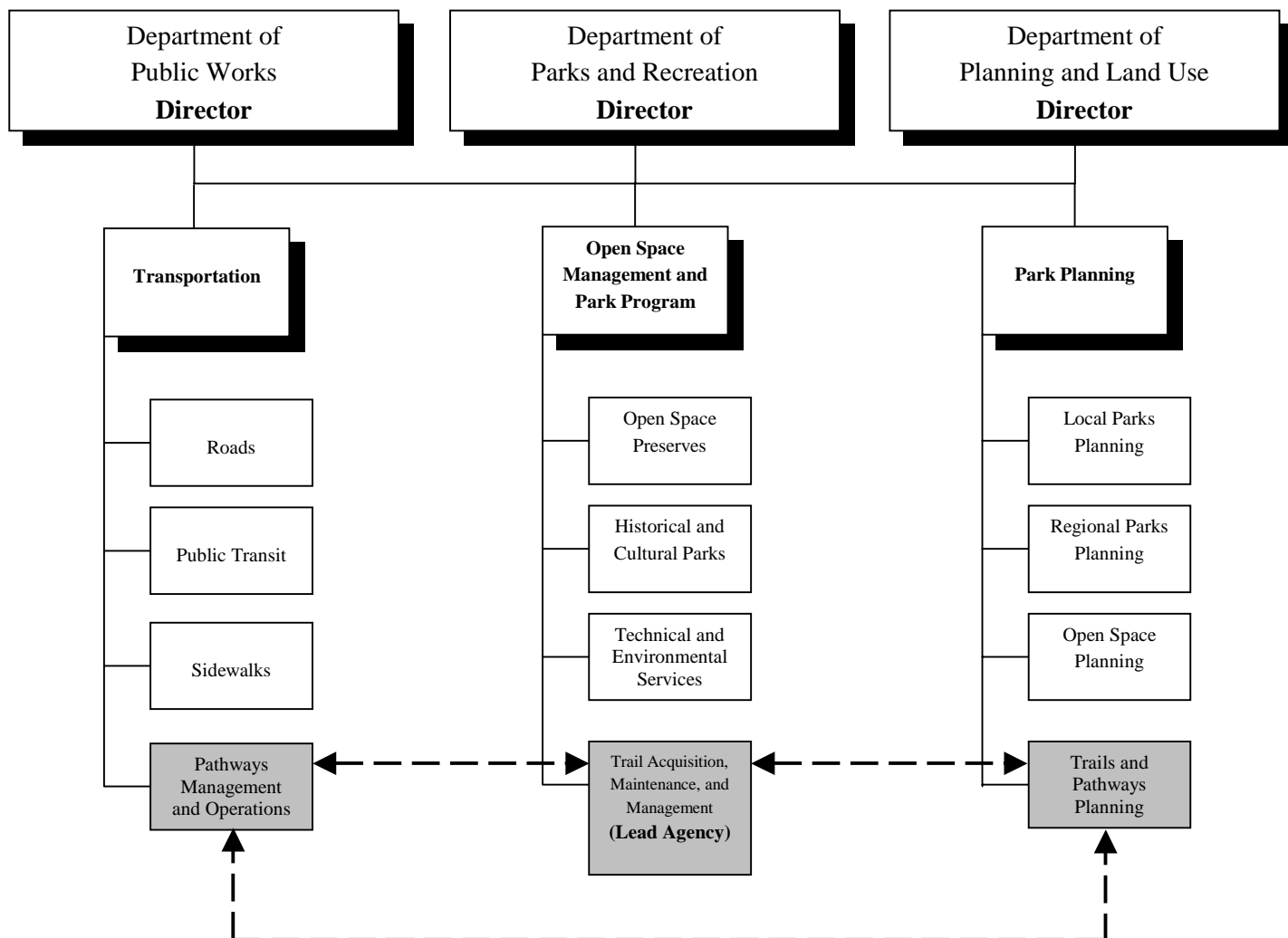


Figure 5-6: Management Structure Model 2

5.2 CONCEPT 1: NEW COUNTY TRAIL PROGRAM/POLICY - TRAILS ON PUBLIC AND PRIVATE LANDS

5.2.1 Concept 1 Description

Concept 1 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program involving both public and private lands. This new Trail Program would be a sub-element within the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. This would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning and implementation policies. The Trail Program would consist of three specific elements:

- Regional Trail Plan
- Community Trail Master Plan
- Design Guidelines – for both the Regional and Community Trails

The County's Trail Program should encourage coordinated decision making and action by other jurisdictions (incorporated cities, state and federal agencies) to implement their particular segments of trails that would be consistent with the County's vision.

5.2.2 General Plan Strategies and Recommendations

The General Plan would have the general text, goals, and policies needed to establish the Trail Program and Regional Trail System, associated guidelines, and ultimately identify the need to prepare a Community Trail Master Plan for the Community/Sub-regional Plan Areas. How Concept 1 could be organized and implemented within the General Plan is discussed in section 5.5. The following are the major recommendations that could be included in the General Plan. For Concept 1, the generalized text should include the following strategies and recommendations:

Strategy 1: Prepare a Trail Plan

The County will need to plan for future trails as the population continues to grow and expand. The expansion of the trail system should occur in two general categories: Regional Trails and Community Trails. The use of pathways should be limited to providing connection to the trail system whenever the use of conventional trails is not feasible.

In the county, there are numerous existing and proposed trails that should be considered in making up the Regional Trail system. Most of the County-owned trail system is located in public parks and designated open space preserves. To make a cohesive Regional Trail System

that connects to these facilities and other trails outside County-owned land, the use of private lands may be required. However, the acquisition of private lands should be done judicially and only when necessary to complete a proposed trail alignment. The County should be the agency that initiates and coordinates Regional Trail efforts with other jurisdictions.

The Community Trails will be addressed differently than the Regional Trails. To provide the “bottom up” approach that is desired for trails within each Community/Sub-regional Plan Area, the area representatives (planning or sponsor group) would provide the County with their recommended trail locations. These Community Trails not only provide needed recreation but also become an important component of the local circulation systems, providing safe bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian access. In communities where there is substantial residential development the primary beneficiaries of these trails will be the local residents.

The baseline/level of service, identified in Chapter 2 *Trail Needs Assessment*, would be the starting point for determining the amount of trails within each community. However, under this concept, trails would only be implemented through the Community / Sub-regional Trail Maps for those communities wishing to participate. Those communities not wanting to participate in the development of a Community Trail Plan would not be required by the County to do so. Even though a trails baseline was prepared for planning purposes, implementation of the baseline could be left as a policy decision by the Board of Supervisors and considered on a community-by-community basis. Once again, the baseline is only one of many tools that will be used in the planning of future Community Trails and is not to be relied on as the only measure of need. If a community does not want to participate in the planning and implementation of trails it should be recognized that available, and typically limited, financial resources would be focused on those communities that want to participate. The only exception would be if Regional Trails identified by the County were located within a non-participating community boundary. In this case, implementation of the trail would take precedence over local desires and segments of Regional Trail would still be implemented throughout that community.

Both the recreation and circulation functions of this Trail Program will become even more important as population grows and recreation and transportation demands increase. The following are recommendations for addressing trail-planning issues when implementing Concept 1.

1. Establish a Trail Program in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan.
2. Establish a Regional Trail Plan, with strong supporting policies within the General Plan. The Regional Trail Plan would include the following:

\$ A Regional Trail Map – based on “*connectivity*” rather than miles.

This concept would utilize primarily public lands for the trail system while using private lands judiciously and only where necessary to complete the system. San Diego County has several existing trails with characteristics and conditions that lend themselves to serving a regional function. They cover long linear distances and transcend the borders of multiple municipalities and communities. These trails are fairly well established and/or are in the later stages of planning and implementation. Some of these trails have been identified by name while others have not yet been identified. The trails listed below are recommended to be included in a Regional Trail Plan which is illustrated in Figure 5-7.

- San Dieguito River Park – Coast to Crest Trail
- Trans County Trail
- Otay Valley Regional Park Trail
- California Riding and Hiking Trail
- Pacific Crest Trail

The County’s participation in these trails could be in the implementation of “missing trail segments”, and the continued maintenance and operations of the existing system or both.

3. Establish a Community Trail Master Plan for participating Community/Sub-regional Planning Areas, as referenced in the County General Plan, with strong supporting policies within the General Plan. The Community Trail Master Plan would include the following:

A series of Community Trail Maps prepared by individual Community Planning or Sponsor Groups interested in developing local trail systems: The Community Planning/Sponsor Groups would take the lead in developing preliminary Community Trail Maps and would work closely with the County towards the eventual approval and adoption of their maps. The County would participate in the process by setting workshops and requesting input and documenting the trails into the Trail Master Plan. The Community Planning/Sponsor Groups would initiate these workshops. The Community Trail Maps and trail priorities would be updated every five years. At that time, the participating group would re-evaluate the existing trail network and determine whether modifications or additions are needed.

4. Utilize pathways wherever necessary to provide critical links to Regional or Community Trail Systems. Pathways would also be used as connections to important community

Figure 5-7 Preliminary Recommended Trail

Back page for Figure 5-7

facilities that cannot be connected by trails. The pathways would be adjacent to public road rights-of-way.

5. Prepare Trail Design Guidelines for the Regional Trail System and supplemented by the Community Trail System. Both would include:
 - Management Structure
 - Trail Characteristics
 - Trail Management and Operations
 - Implementation Strategy and Plan
6. Maintain this County Trail Program as the basis for future planning, coordination, and implementation of the trail system.
7. Develop criteria that would be used to prioritize both Regional and Community Trails.
8. Prioritize Regional trail alignments by segments.
9. Prioritize Community trail alignments by segments.
10. Use population-oriented baseline (level of service) of .84 miles/1000 persons as a guide to establish the quantity of community trails the County will aim to satisfy.
11. Successfully implement the Trail Plan in a manner that reflects current and future population patterns and the needs of residents of the unincorporated region of the county of San Diego.
12. Clearly define a trail survey process for communities on a regular basis (once every five years) to confirm and update future trail needs. The survey should be used to reaffirm previous trail need assumptions.
13. Provide periodic updates of the benefits of trails (once every 5 years) to provide continued support for future trail implementation and nexus opportunities / requirements.
14. Continue to provide and expand the variety of trail experiences, including urban/suburban, rural, and wilderness trails as well as the variety of linear distances for users to experience.

-
15. Clearly define trail types (Regional and Community) and provide trail guidelines for future trail needs. Definitions and design guidelines should become an element of the Regional Trail Plan and the Community Trail Master Plan.
 16. Provide adequate support facilities, including staging areas that will sustain existing and future trail implementation. These facilities should include, but not be limited to parking facilities, restrooms, signage, fencing, refuse containers, benches and gates.
 17. Where possible, locate trail routes to highlight the County's recreational and educational experiences, including natural scenic, cultural and historic resources.
 18. Review and revise the current General Plan Element and Board Policy I-116 so that it can be easily interpreted and is consistent with new goals, policies, and direction of the Board of Supervisors.

Strategy 2: Establish Trails that are Sensitive to Land Use Concerns and Environmental Issues.

The major purpose of trails is to provide the recreation, transportation, health, and quality of life benefits associated with walking, hiking, biking, and horseback riding throughout the county's varied environments. To ensure that this opportunity is provided and available in the future it is important that these trails be located, designed and maintained so that their impact to surrounding land uses and sensitive environmental resources is minimal. The following are recommendations for addressing these concerns when implementing Concept 1:

1. Use lands already in public ownership or proposed for public acquisition wherever possible for trail alignments. This would be in preference to the acquisition of privately owned properties.
2. Provide trail routes that meet the public needs while respecting the rights of property owners.
3. Secure trail routes across private lands through purchase, easements, dedication or by other means from a willing property owner/seller. Establish a fair and reasonable method for acquiring trails and for prioritizing acquisition needs.
4. Establish new trails in locations that will not significantly impact sensitive environmental resources.

-
5. Allow for the continued involvement and input of the agricultural community to help identify trail opportunities within agricultural areas. Establish guidelines for trails that address the concerns and issues of the agricultural community.

Strategy 3: Implementation of the Trail Program

Implementation of this Trail Program will require using a variety of methods for acquisition, development, operation and maintenance. This Trail Program will look for opportunities to use both public and private lands for trail implementation. Some of the tools for obtaining trail routes could include:

- \$ Constructing future trails on existing county public lands, such as parks, open space preserves and/or within the MSCP.
- \$ Locating trails (pathways) within public road rights-of-way.
- \$ Possibly developing Joint Use Agreements with public agencies other than parks and open space agencies (e.g. utility districts, school districts, Caltrans, water districts, etc.).
- \$ Purchasing additional lands or trail easements from willing property owners.
- \$ Obtaining gifts for trail easements from private property owners.
- \$ Requesting mandatory dedication of trail easements on private land when County approval is sought for development along proposed trail routes.
- \$ Establishing development fees or assessment districts (CSA) for the acquisition and maintenance of trails on public or private lands.
- \$ Continuing with volunteer efforts, non-profit organizations, and/or land trust involvement for trail implementation.

The most appropriate method will depend on the particular opportunities available to a trail route or segment. The following are recommendations that should be used when defining Strategy 3 implementation features for Concept 1:

1. Identify a specific County Department for administering the Trail Program. A suggested department is Parks and Recreation. Whichever department is selected should have the

administrative, funding, maintenance and operational resources to make the Trail Program functional and successful.

2. Continue to allow for and encourage volunteer groups to assist in the Trail Program.
3. Indemnify all persons granting an easement or other land owners immediately adjoining a County Regional or Community Trail.
4. Establish as many acquisition and funding opportunities for trail implementation, maintenance and operation as possible to insure economic viability for the Trail Program.
5. Require mandatory dedication of easements from private land development projects for trail alignments identified in the Regional and Community Trail Master Plans.
6. Establish nexus and proportionality finding that will allow mandatory dedication of land for trail easements. This should be done for all County development approvals where Regional Trails and Community Trails have been identified
7. Establish a priority list for trail implementation based on needs and costs.
8. Amend the current PLDO credit to allow developers to receive credits for the dedication of trails and/or easements.
9. Initiate discussions to develop an “Adopt a Trail” program.

Strategy 4: Effectively Maintain and Operate the Trail Program

In order for a successful Trail Program to be implemented, the County needs to commit the necessary resources to support the program. To date, the County program has not had this type of financial or personnel support. When trails are managed and used properly they become a regional and community asset. If neglected and not maintained, trails become a nuisance and community support and commitment will diminish. Well-maintained and managed trails will only encourage the use and discourage the misuse of trails. There are many concerns about the location of trails near private properties including agricultural lands. However, it should be noted that with increased trail management by the County, and increased staff, many of these concerns could be addressed.

The continued involvement of volunteer groups will also be an important supplemental aspect of trail implementation and maintenance. If financial resources do not become available as quickly

as needed, the reliance on these groups may be required to help fill the gap. The following are recommendations for the operation and maintenance of Concept 1:

1. The County should not initiate any trail construction or implementation until a management plan and strategy has been clearly outlined and identified.
2. Establish a management plan that outlines the policies, program and funding necessary to implement, operate, and maintain the Trail Program.
3. Assign responsibility for the operation and management of County trails to the Department of Parks and Recreation. This should always be the case unless other trail managing organizations agree to assume responsibility. This would include multi-jurisdictional agencies that have been formed to implement and operate a joint use trail. Maintenance policies should be consistent with County guidelines.
4. Coordinate all elements of trail planning, acquisitions, development, and management with all of the jurisdictions within San Diego County. Consider establishing an inter-jurisdictional technical committee when coordination of specific trail connections is needed.
5. Develop trail design criteria that discourage the inappropriate use of trails.
6. Establish a variety of funding mechanisms for trail acquisition, implementation, and maintenance.
7. Community and volunteer groups should be encouraged to provide trail support services by conducting limited maintenance and construction activities.

5.2.3 Needs Evaluation

Regional Needs

Proper implementation of Concept 1 would meet the growing trail needs of the unincorporated county. The primary function of Regional Trails is to make logical connections or provide the missing segments to other existing or planned long distance linear trails that cross Community/Sub-regional Plan Area and even county borders. These Regional Trails will extend beyond the borders of communities, provide recreational service levels to multiple communities, and form essential links through the county and region. Regional Trails generally have more prominence and public recognition because access is typically available to a broad distribution of users.

The Regional Trail structure identified in Concept 1 would meet the regional needs by recognizing these connections and adding to the existing and planned trail system, and participating in the implementation, maintenance and operations of a Regional Trail System. This concept also provides the opportunity for utilizing both public and private lands that would be needed to establish a useful trail system. However, it should also be noted that since the Regional Trail System is fairly well established (primarily on public lands) its future implementation will not rely heavily on the acquisition of private lands.

Community Needs

Concept 1 has the structure to ensure that existing and future Community Trail needs are met. The concept provides the opportunity for Community Planning/Sponsor Groups to participate, if they so desire, in preparing their own Trail Plan and subsequent guidelines. This participation allows Community Planning/Sponsor Groups to address the specific needs and types of trails that would best serve their communities. This concept also has a provision to allow for individual Community Trail Maps to be updated (every five years). This would allow future needs of the communities to be re-evaluated and for Community Trail Maps to be updated. Additionally, Concept 1 meets the Community Trail needs by recognizing that both public and private lands will be important for the implementation of a useful trail system.

Public Opinion

In most of the surveys identified in Chapter 2 *Public Needs Assessment* it was noted that future trails should provide a variety of lengths and experiences. Trail connectivity was also important and high on the list of what trails should offer. The surveys also identified the desire to have “close-in” trails that are easily accessible. A large number (16) of the Community Planning/Sponsor Groups participated in the creation of preliminary Community Trail Maps, and 22 of the 26 groups indicated an interest in establishing local trail networks. This level of participation identifies that “close-in” type Community Trails are highly desirable. Concept 1 has the ability to address all of these issues by providing trails at both the regional and community level.

5.2.4 Jurisdictional Analysis Regarding Implementation

The Regional Trail System would, in certain areas, involve more than one jurisdiction. This could include Federal, State and local municipalities depending on the final general alignment of the Regional Trail. The County may decide that it would be beneficial to participate with these jurisdictions and share in the cost, maintenance and operations of existing and future Regional Trails.

It is anticipated that the majority of the Community Trails would be developed primarily within the boundaries of the Community/Subregional Plan Areas. However, there may be opportunities to connect to surrounding trails that are being proposed by other jurisdictions. These trails have the potential to be either regional serving or community type trails. If this opportunity presents itself the Community Planning/Sponsor Groups and County staff should determine if it would be beneficial to connect to these trails. They can also decide if participation in sharing the cost, maintenance and operation of future trails would be beneficial.

5.2.5 General Summary of Concept 1

Concept 1 provides the necessary elements within the Trail Program to achieve the needs for both Regional and Community Trails. The success of this concept will depend on the ability to meet the needs of both trail types utilizing both public and private lands. As stated earlier, the existing Regional Trail System is fairly well established (primarily on public lands) and its future implementation will not rely heavily on the acquisition of private lands.

Utilizing both public and private lands for the implementation of a new Community Trail System will be extremely important. As stated earlier, most of the existing communities are already in fairly developed areas with limited public lands available for future trails. Implementing a successful and complete trail system may require the limited use of private lands. Eliminating this possibility would greatly hinder the ability to provide trails that can best serve the communities. Choosing Concept 1 for both the Regional and Community Trail implementation would be the best chance of providing the wide variety of trail settings, experiences, and connectivity that is desirable for future trails.

5.3 CONCEPT 2: NEW COUNTY PROGRAM/POLICY - TRAILS ON PUBLIC LANDS ONLY

5.3.1 Concept 2 Description

Concept 2 would establish a new methodology for the implementation of a future Trail Program involving only available public lands. The new Trail Program would identify the existing trails and catalog them as either Regional or Community Trails. The County would be responsible for the planning and implementation of the Regional Trails while the individual Community Planning/Sponsor Groups would be responsible for preparing and updating their Community Trail Master Plans.

This new Trail Program would be identified as a sub-element within the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. This would contain the vision for the County Trail Program,

specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies. The Trail Program would consist of three specific elements:

- Regional Trail Plan
- Community Trail Master Plan
- Design Guidelines – for both the Regional and Community Trails

The County's Trail Program should also encourage coordinated decision and action by other jurisdictions (incorporated cities, state and federal agencies) to implement their particular segments of trails that would be consistent with the County's vision.

5.3.2 General Plan Goals and Objectives

The General Plan would have the general text, goals, and policies needed to establish the Trail Program and Regional Trail System, associated guidelines, and ultimately would identify the need to prepare a Community Trail Master Plan for the Community/Sub-regional Plan Areas. How Concept 2 could be organized and implemented within the General Plan is discussed in section 5.5. The following would be the major recommendations that could be included in the General Plan. For Concept 2, the generalized text should include the following strategies and recommendations:

Strategy 1: Prepare a Trail Plan

The County will need to plan for future trails as the population continues to grow and expand. The expansion of the trail system should occur in two general categories, Regional Trails, and Community Trails. In this concept the use of private lands for trail implementation is eliminated. It is possible that the use of pathways for trails has the potential to be expanded. Pathways, which are limited to public road rights-of-way, may play a larger role in developing the Community Trail System.

Although this is a "Public" lands only concept there are two areas where private lands could still play a role and influence trails. The first area involves the existing trails. In this concept, existing trails that are within private lands would remain within the Trail Program. All future trail implementation would be limited to public lands only. The Board of Supervisors could decide to eliminate existing trails on private lands from the Trail Program but it is not recommended. The second area involves private landowners wishing to "gift", or willingly dedicate or offer land for sale to the Trail Program. In such cases, the County should have the ability to accept such offers as long as the trails add considerable value to implementation of the overall program.

There are numerous existing and proposed trails that should be considered when developing the Regional Trail System. Most of the County owned trail system is located in public parks and designated open space preserves. To make a cohesive Regional Trail System that connects to these facilities and other regional type trails, the County will only utilize public lands. This could make it more difficult to accomplish a cohesive trail system, perhaps requiring the use of pathways to make critical connections that would otherwise have been on private lands. The County should be the agency that initiates and coordinates Regional Trail efforts with other jurisdictions.

The Community Trails will be addressed differently than the Regional Trails. To provide the “ground up” approach that is desired for trails within each Community/Sub-regional Planning Area, the area representatives (planning or sponsor group) would provide the County with their recommended trail locations. Trails in these areas will not only provide needed recreation but also become an important component of the local circulation systems, providing safe bicycle, pedestrian and equestrian access. In communities where there is substantial residential development, the primary beneficiaries of these trails will be the local residents.

The baseline/level of service, identified in Chapter 2 *Trail Needs Assessment*, would be the starting point for determining the amount of trails within each community. However, under this concept, trails would only be implemented through the Community / Sub-regional Trail Maps for those communities wishing to participate. Those communities not wanting to participate in the development of a Community Trail Plan would not be required by the County to do so. Even though a trails baseline was prepared for planning purposes, implementation of the baseline could be left as a policy decision by the Board of Supervisors and considered on a community-by-community basis. Once again, the baseline is only one of many tools that will be used in the planning of future Community Trails and is not to be relied on as the only measure of need. If a community does not want to participate in the planning and implementation of trails it should be recognized that available, and typically limited, financial resources would be focused on those communities that want to participate. The only exception would be if Regional Trails identified by the County were located within a non-participating community boundary. In this case, implementation of the trail would take precedence over local desires and segments of Regional Trail would still be implemented throughout that community.

Most of the existing communities are already in fairly developed areas with limited public land available for possible trail expansion. To implement a trail system within only public lands may require an extensive use of pathways in the communities. Choosing this concept for trail implementation would possibly require that a significant portion of a Community Trail experience would be directly adjacent to roadways. It should be further noted that both the recreational and circulation functions of this Trail Program will become even more important as

population grows and recreational and transportation demands increase. The following are recommendations for addressing trail-planning issues when implementing Concept 2:

1. Establish a Trail Program in the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan.
2. Establish a Regional Trail Plan, with strong supporting policies within the General Plan. The Trail Master Plan would include the following:

This concept would utilize public lands for the trail system including pathways that would be required to complete the system. San Diego County has several existing trails with characteristics and conditions that lend themselves to serving a regional function. They cover long linear distances and transcend the borders of multiple municipalities and communities. These trails are fairly well established and/or are in the later stages of planning and implementation. Some of these trails have been identified by name while others have not yet been identified. The trails listed below are recommended to be included in a Regional Trail Plan which is illustrated in Figure 5-7.

- San Dieguito River Park – Coast to Crest Trail
- The Trans County Trail
- Otay Valley Regional Park Trail
- California Riding and Hiking Trail
- Pacific Crest Trail

The County's participation in these trails could be in the implementation of "missing trail segments", in the continued maintenance and operation of the existing system or both. The use of pathways may be necessary to complete this system since private lands will not be used for trail implementation.

3. Establish a Community Trail Master Plan for participating Community/Sub-regional Planning Areas with strong supporting policies within the General Plan. The Community Trail Master Plan would include the following:

A series of Community Trail Maps prepared by interested individual Community Planning or Sponsor Groups: The Community Planning/Sponsor Groups would take the lead in developing preliminary Community Trail Maps and would work closely with the County towards the eventual approval and adoption of their maps. The County would participate in the process by setting workshops and requesting input and documenting the trails into the Trail Master Plan recognizing that only public lands could be utilized. The Community Planning/Sponsor Groups would initiate these workshops. The Community

Trail Maps and trail priorities would be updated every five years. At that time, the participating group would evaluate the existing trail network and determine the location and need for future trails.

4. Utilize pathways wherever necessary to provide critical links to Regional or Community Trail Systems. Pathways would also be used as connections to important community facilities that cannot be connected by trails. In this particular concept the use of pathways, which would be adjacent to public rights-of-way, may be used extensively to insure that the trail system maintains a high level of connectivity.
5. Prepare Trail Design Guidelines for the Regional Trail System and supplemented by the Community Trail System. Both would include:
 - Management Structure
 - Trail Characteristics
 - Trail Management and Operations
 - Implementation Strategy and Plan
6. Maintain this Countywide Trail Master Plan as the basis for future planning, coordination, and implementation of a Countywide trail system.
7. Prioritize Regional Trail alignments by segments.
8. Prioritize Community Trail alignments by segments.
9. Develop criteria that would be used to prioritize both trail types.
10. Use population-oriented baseline (level of service) of .84 miles/1000 persons as a guide to establish the quantity of community trails the County will aim to satisfy.
11. Successfully implement the Trail Plan in a manner that reflects current and future population patterns and the needs of residents of the unincorporated region of the county of San Diego.
12. Clearly define a trail survey process for communities on a regular basis (once every five years) to confirm and update future trail needs. The survey should be used to reaffirm previous trail need assumptions.
13. Establish the benefits of trails to support future trail implementation and nexus opportunities / requirements.

-
14. Continue to provide and expand the variety of trail experiences, including urban/suburban, rural, and wilderness trails as well as the variety of linear distances for users to experience.
 15. Clearly define trail types (Regional and Community) and provide trail guidelines for future trail needs. Definitions and design guidelines should become an element of the Trail Master Plan.
 16. Provide adequate support facilities, including staging areas that will sustain existing and future trail implementation. These facilities should include, but not be limited to parking facilities, restrooms, signage, fencing, refuse containers, benches and gates.
 17. Where possible, locate trail routes to highlight the County's recreational and educational experiences, including natural scenic, cultural and historic resources.
 18. Retain existing trails that are currently located on private lands.
 19. Review and revise the current General Plan Element and Board Policy I-116 so that it can be easily interpreted and is consistent with new goals, policies, and direction of the Board of Supervisors.

Strategy 2: Establish Trails that are Sensitive to Land Use Concerns and Environmental Issues.

The major purpose of trails is to provide the recreational, transportation, health and quality of life benefits associated with walking, hiking, biking, and horseback riding throughout the county's varied environments. To insure that this opportunity is provided and available in the future it is important that these trails be located, designed and maintained so that their impact to surrounding land uses and sensitive environmental resources are minimal. The following are recommendations for the addressing these concerns when implementing Concept 2:

1. Use lands already in public ownership or proposed for public acquisition for trail alignments.
2. Provide trail routes that meet the public needs while respecting the rights of adjacent property owners.
3. Establish new trails in locations that will not impact sensitive environmental resources.

-
4. Allow for the continued involvement and input of the agricultural community to help identify trail locations when adjacent to or near agricultural areas. Establish guidelines for trails that address the concerns and issues of the agricultural community.

Strategy 3: Implementation of the Trail Program

Implementation of this Trail Program will require using a variety of methods for acquisition, development, operation and maintenance. This Trail Program will look for opportunities to use public lands only for trail implementation. Some of the tools for obtaining trail routes could include:

- Constructing future trails on existing county public lands such as parks, open space preserves and/or within the MSCP.
- Locating trails (pathways) within public rights-of-way.
- Possibly developing Joint Use Agreements with public agencies other than parks and open space agencies (e.g. utility districts, school districts, Caltrans, water districts, etc.).
- Purchase of additional lands or trail easements only from willing property owners.
- Obtain gifts for trail easements from private landowners.
- Establish development fees or assessment districts (CSA) for the development and maintenance of trails on public lands.
- Use volunteer efforts, non-profit organizations, and/or land trust for trail implementation.

Which of these methods is most appropriate will depend on the particular opportunities available to a trail route or segment. The following are recommendations that should be used when defining Strategy 3 implementation features for Concept 1:

1. Identify a specific County Department for administering the Trail Program. A suggested department is Parks and Recreation. Whichever department is selected should have the administrative, funding, maintenance and operational resources to make the Trail Program functional and successful.
2. Continue to allow for and encourage volunteer groups to assist in the Trail Program.

-
3. Indemnify all persons granting an easement or other land owners immediately adjoining a County Regional or Community Trail.
 4. Establish as many acquisition and funding opportunities for trail implementation, maintenance and operation as possible to insure economic viability for the Trail Program.
 5. Establish a priority list for trail implementation based on needs and costs.
 6. Initiate discussions to develop an “Adopt a Trail” program.

Strategy 4: Effectively Maintain and Operate the Trail Program

In order for a successful Trail Program to be implemented, the County needs to commit the necessary resources to support the program. To date, the County program has not had this type of financial or personnel support. When trails are managed and used properly they become a regional and community asset. If neglected and not maintained, the trails become a nuisance and community support and commitment will diminish. Well-maintained and managed trails will only encourage the use and discourage the misuse of trails. There are many concerns about the location of trails near private properties including agricultural lands. However, it should be noted that with increased trail management by the County, and increased staff, many of these concerns could be addressed.

The continued involvement of volunteer groups will also be an important supplemental aspect of trail implementation and maintenance. If financial resources do not become available as quickly as needed, the reliance on these groups may be required to help fill the gap. The following are recommendations for the operation and maintenance of Concept 2:

1. The County should not initiate any trail construction or implementation until a management plan and strategy has been clearly outlined and identified.
2. Establish a management plan that outlines the rules and regulations for the Trail Program.
3. Assign responsibility for the maintenance of County trails to the Department of Parks and Recreation. This should always be the case unless other trail managing organizations agree to assume responsibility. This would include multi-jurisdictional agencies that have been formed to implement and operate a joint use trail. Maintenance policies should be consistent with County guidelines.

-
4. Coordinate all elements of trail planning, acquisitions, development, and management with all of the jurisdictions within San Diego County. Consider establishing an inter-jurisdictional technical committee when coordination of specific trail connections is needed.
 5. Develop trail design criteria that discourage the inappropriate use of trails.
 6. Establish a variety of funding mechanisms for trail acquisition, implementation, and maintenance.
 7. Community and volunteer groups should be encouraged to provide trail support services by conducting limited maintenance and construction activities.

5.3.3 Needs Evaluation

Regional Needs

Proper implementation of Concept 2 would meet the growing Regional Trail needs of the unincorporated county. The primary function of Regional Trails is to make logical connections or “fill in” the missing segments to other existing and planned long distance linear trails that cross Community/Sub-regional Plan Areas and even county borders. These Regional Trails will extend beyond the borders of communities, provide recreational service levels to multiple communities, and form essential links through the county and region. Regional Trails generally have more prominence and public recognition because access is typically available to a broad distribution of users.

The Regional Trail structure identified in Concept 2 would meet the regional needs by recognizing these connections and adding to the existing or already planned trail system, and participating in the implementation, maintenance and operation of the Regional Trails. This concept provides the opportunity for utilizing only public lands that would be needed to establish a useful trail system. The Regional Trail System is fairly well established (primarily on public lands) and its future implementation will not rely heavily on the acquisition of private lands. The use of pathways may be sufficient to complete the Regional Trail System so that relying on the acquisition of private lands will not be necessary for the trails to be implemented. Final analysis of this impact will only be realized when further studies are done on specific Regional Trail alignments.

Community Needs

Concept 2 provides the opportunity for Community Planning/Sponsor Groups to participate, if they so desire, in preparing their own Trail Plan and subsequent guidelines. This participation allows Community Planning/Sponsor Groups to address the specific needs and types of trails that would best serve their communities. This concept also has a provision to allow for the individual Community Trail Maps to be updated (every five years). This would allow for future needs of the communities to be reevaluated and changes to the Community Trail Maps to occur.

The ability for Concept 2 to fully meet the Community Trail needs by utilizing only public lands is more difficult to assess. As stated earlier, most of the existing communities are already in fairly developed areas with limited public lands available for possible trail expansion. To implement a trail system within only public lands may require an extensive use of pathways in the communities. Choosing this concept for trail implementation would possibly require that a significant portion of a Community Trail experience be directly adjacent to roadways. Although the community's trail needs may be met (related to the number of miles) the trail experiences will be diminished with the majority of the Community Trails being part of the street system. This defeats one of the main elements regarding trails and that is to provide a variety of trail experiences.

Concept 2 has the structure to ensure that the existing and future Community Trail needs are met but it may be limited in providing the type and variety of trail experiences that many hope to achieve with the new Trail Program.

Public Opinion

In most of the surveys identified in Chapter 2 *Public Needs Assessment* it was noted that future trails should provide a variety of lengths and experiences. Trail connectivity was also important and high on the list of what trails should offer. The survey also identified the desire to have “close-in” trails that are easily accessible. A large number (16) of the Community Planning/Sponsor Groups participated in the creation of preliminary Community Trail Maps, and 22 of the 26 groups indicated an interest in establishing local trail networks. This level of participation identifies that “close-in” type Community Trails are highly desirable. Concept 2 has the ability to address most of these issues by providing trails at both the regional level and the community level. The limitation of Concept 2 is that the variety of trail experiences may be limited. This is particularly true at the community level, due to the possible heavy reliance on pathways to fill the trail needs for the Community Plan/Sub-regional Areas.

5.3.4 Jurisdictional Analysis Regarding Implementation

The Regional Trail System would, in certain areas, involve more than one jurisdiction. This could include Federal, State and local municipalities depending on the final general alignment of the Regional Trail. The County may decide that it would be beneficial to participate with these jurisdictions and share in the cost, maintenance and operation of existing and future Regional Trails.

It is anticipated that the majority of Community Trails would be developed primarily within the boundaries of the Community/Subregional Planning Areas. However, there may be opportunities to connect to surrounding trails that are being proposed by other jurisdictions. These trails have the potential to be either regional serving or community type trails. If this opportunity presents itself the Community Planning/Sponsor Groups and County staff should determine if it would be beneficial to connect to these trails. They can also decide if participation in sharing the cost, maintenance and operation of future trails would be beneficial.

5.3.5 General Summary of Concept 2

Concept 2 provides the necessary elements within the Trail Program to achieve the needs for both Regional and Community Trails. The overall success of this concept hinges on the ability to meet the needs of both trail types by utilizing only public lands. But it should also be noted that with the use of the public lands only concept the County would further depend on Federal, State and even other cities' trails to meet the future trail needs of the county residents.

As stated earlier, there are numerous fairly well established existing and proposed trails that are candidates for a Regional Trail System. Most of these trails occur primarily on public lands. The future implementation of these Regional Trails will not rely heavily on the acquisition of private lands. The limited use of pathways may be sufficient to complete the Regional Trails system so that relying on the acquisition of private lands may not be that important. However, implementation of the Community Trail System with this concept may be quite different. Most of the existing communities are already in fairly developed areas with limited public lands available for possible trails. Implementing a trail system on only public lands may require an extensive use of pathways within the existing communities. The extensive use of pathways may also make trail connections less direct, possibly decreasing the use of trails.

Although this is a "Public" lands only concept there are currently numerous trails that are on private lands. This concept proposes to retain these trails and that all future trail implementation would be within public lands only. The Board of Supervisors could decide to eliminate the existing trails on private lands from the Trail Program but it is not recommended. There is no

merit to eliminating trails that are in place, functioning properly, and providing a benefit to the area it serves. Continuing these trails will only enhance the Trail Program. Additionally, if this concept is chosen the County should provide the opportunity for private landowners to “gift” or willingly provide land (for purchase or by easement) to the Trail Program. The County should in this concept have the ability to accept these offers as long as the location of these properties benefits the implementation of the Trail Program.

In choosing this concept for trail implementation, it is possible that a significant portion of a Community Trail experience would be directly adjacent to roadways. With the primary trail experience potentially being limited to public road rights-of-way this concept for the Trail Program is less desirable. Based on this limitation, Concept 2 does not provide the same level of trail experience for trail users as a concept that allows private lands to be used for trails. An extensive pathway system should not be an acceptable substitute for a Community Trail System that is seeking a high quality user experience and a wide variety of trail experiences. Meeting community desires for these types of trail experiences may only be possible if both public and private lands are used for trail implementation.

5.4 PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION MODELS

Within this section three (3) Program Implementation Models are described for possible General Plan implementation of the selected concept. The Board will need to select one of the models to accompany the selected concept. In selecting the Trail Program implementation model it is important to consider how this model will best fulfill the goals of a Regional and Community Trail System. The County of San Diego is unique in that there are numerous Planning/Sponsor Groups that will be participating in the creation of their Community Trail Maps. The implementation model for the Trail Program should provide the flexibility and ease to accommodate the wide and diverse needs that each group will require. This flexibility will be necessary not only in the creation of the trail maps but also for future modification and updating as needed. The Regional Trail System will not be as complicated as the Community Trail System. As such, the Regional Trail Plan will not need the flexibility for modification that the Community Trail Plan will need.

5.4.1 Program Implementation Model 1

In this model the new Trail Program would be described in the sub-element of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. This would contain the vision for the County Trail Program, specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies. Within the Trail Program a Regional Trail Plan and associated design guidelines would be prepared. Having the Regional Trail Plan within the General Plan will provide the necessary mandate that these trails

are important, desirable and provide a public benefit. The Regional Trail Plan would serve as the guide for the County and provide a coordinated vision for linking to existing trails by other jurisdictions and agencies. It will also provide the necessary documentation when going after funding opportunities in the future. When the County is asked to show its support for trails they would be able to point to the Trail Program and Regional Trail Plan within the General Plan to aid in securing trail development funding.

For Model 1 (See Figure 5-1) the General Plan would make reference to a Community Trail Master Plan. The Community Trail Master Plan would be a document approved and adopted by the Board of Supervisors but maintained outside of the General Plan. Placing the Community / Sub-regional Plan Area Trail Maps outside of the General Plan would allow for adjustments, updating, and modifications of the trail maps without requiring a General Plan Amendment. With the numerous Community Planning and Sponsor Groups that are anticipated to participate in preparing a Trail Plan this methodology would allow for the greatest level of flexibility.

5.4.2 Program Implementation Model 2

In this model (See Figure 5-2) the new Trail Program would be described in the sub-element of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan. The Trail Program would generally describe the vision for the County Trail Program with specific strategies, planning policies and implementation policies identified. Reference in the General Plan would be made to the Trail Master Plan. The Trail Master Plan would include the Regional Trails, Community / Sub-regional Planning Area Trail Map and associated design guidelines for both. The Trail Master Plan would be outside of the General Plan allowing for adjustments, updating, and modifications of all maps without requiring a General Plan Amendment.

5.4.3 Program Implementation Model 3

Model 3 (See Figure 5-3) would retain the entire Trail Program within the General Plan. All trail mapping and guidelines would remain within the General Plan similar to the methodology that exists today. The implementation for the program would be outside the General Plan.

5.4.4 General Summary

The program implementation model that would provide the best methodology for the Trail Program would be Model 1. It would keep the Regional Trail Plan within the General Plan providing the necessary structure and strength needed for the Trail Program. In addition, by referencing the Community Trail Master Plan in the General Plan but allowing for trail

development outside of the General Plan it provides the opportunity and flexibility for changes, revisions and updates without requiring a General Plan Amendment.

5.5 MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE MODELS

There is currently a lack of administrative consolidation that unifies existing County resources and facilities with similar goals and functions (i.e., the administration of trails within parks, open space and MSCP lands). In addition, there is currently no allocated funding, financing or other resources for implementation of a Trail Program. To date, there is almost a total reliance on volunteers for trail construction, maintenance, and planning for those trails located outside of County Park land.

It has been identified in the trail system Assessment report that to insure the initial and continued success of the Trail Program a definitive Management Structure needs to be prepared and put into action. After reviewing numerous options for the management structure, two different models are proposed. The Board will need to select a management model described below that will accompany both the selected concept and program implementation model. The combination of all three will become the basis for the overall Strategic Trail System.

5.5.1 Management Structure Model 1

The management structure for Model 1 recommends that the County commit the necessary resources to support the Trail Program and that administrative responsibility lie within the Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR). Since trails are primarily a recreation function it would be appropriate that the DPR be the lead department for the Trail Program. Additionally, this department has the most in common with a Trail Program. Most of the existing county trails are located within the public parks and open space preserves and currently this department provides the majority of trail construction, maintenance and management for these trails. Also, it is anticipated that many of the future trails will utilize public lands for implementation. DPR has within its administration the staff that does interpretive work with trail users and has mechanisms in place to efficiently utilize trail volunteers and patrol organizations. It should also be noted, of the other municipalities contacted that had Trail Programs, the parks department typically managed the programs.

The Department of Parks and Recreation is one of ten departments that report to the General Manager for the Land Use and Environment Group (LUEG). Parks and Recreation has five strategic business units within its existing structure. The Trail Program has a logical fit into the current “Open Space Management” business unit.

It is recommended that the management structure for the Trail Program be implemented in two phases.

- \$ Phase 1: In the beginning, the Trail Program would benefit from being within the Open Space Management business unit (see Figure 5-4) of the existing business plan. Trail operation and management would occur within the Open Space Preserve section. Planning and acquisition for trails and pathways would occur within the Technical and Environmental section. Also, working within the existing management structure of DPR would allow the Trail Program to take advantage of the Financing Services and Public Information Support. During this first phase the ongoing operation and management of existing pathways could continue to be within the Department of Public Works.
- \$ Phase 2: In the future, when the Trail Program becomes more established, the management structure could evolve into its own business unit within the Department of Parks and Recreation. This would occur when the Trail Program matures, becomes more complex, and has sufficient funding resources that would allow it to branch out and develop into its own unit (See Figure 5-5). During this phase it may be appropriate for the operation and management features of Pathways to be transferred from the Department of Public Works and consolidated into the Trail Program of the Department of Parks and Recreation.

5.5.2 Management Structure Model 2

The management structure for Model 2 would involve three different departments. These departments would consist of the Department of Public Works, the Department of Planning and Land Use and the Department of Parks and Recreation (Figure 5-6). Each department would be responsible for different elements of the Trail Program.

- The Department of Parks and Recreation would be lead agency and have overall responsibility for implementation, management, and maintenance of existing and future trails.
- The Department of Planning and Land Use would be responsible for all planning aspects of future trails and pathways.
- The Department of Public Works would be responsible for the implementation, management, and maintenance of existing and future pathways that are with public road rights-of-way.

5.5.3 General Summary

Management Structure Model 1 would be the most efficient use of existing resources and would limit the number of departments involved in the management, operations and planning of trails. The DPR would be the most effective department to manage the proposed Trail Program. But it should be noted that the department would need the financial and personnel resources in order for this to occur. It cannot be expected that this department's current staff and financial resources pick up the additional responsibility for this new program without the necessary support for its success. Just as it is important to identify the appropriate management structure, it is equally important to identify the means, financial and otherwise, to insure that the Trail Program can be successful in any department.

Management Structure Model 2 involves multiple departments requiring a higher degree of inter-departmental interaction. This would not be the most efficient use of financial or personnel resources. In establishing a new Trail Program it would best serve the county to try and minimize the number of departments involved in order. Having three departments trying to interact and meet the vision of a new Trail Program would be extremely difficult. Model 1 would have the best opportunity for meeting this vision and to lead the Trail Program in the future.

5.6 COST CONSIDERATIONS

The cost of developing a Trail Program can vary greatly depending on the location of the trail, such as whether the trail is on public land and/or public right-of-way or whether the trail is located on private land that would require acquisition of title and/or easement. Additionally, other factors influence trail implementation costs such as the terrain, width of trail, vegetation, soils/subgrade, amenities provided, and (if needed) mitigation cost. The cost associated with the Trail Program will consist of two primary elements: Trail Implementation Cost and Maintenance and Operation Cost. The following is an overview of what the County could expect to spend on either of the Trail Program concepts.

5.6.1 Community Trails Cost Assumptions

In order to provide an estimate of potential Trail Program costs, broad based assumptions were made for each of the two (2) Trail Program Concepts as they relate to implementation of Community Trails:

- Trail improvements would be fully applied to the 316 miles of projected new trails that were to fulfill trail needs by the year 2020 for the Community / Subregional plan areas.

-
- Every year, for a twenty-year duration, almost 16 miles of trail would be sufficiently planned, identified, and ready for implementation.
 - Trail development costs include acquisition, planning, environmental, design, and construction using the cost assumptions described in Chapter 4.2 and illustrated in Table 4-1.
 - For the “High Range” cost projections, 100% of the proposed trails were assumed to be multi-use trails (8 feet in width).
 - For the “Low Range” cost projections, 60%, of the proposed trails were assumed to be single use hiking trails (narrower in width than a multi-use trail) and the other 40% were multi-use trails. The assumption of 60% for single use hiking trails corresponds with the surveys (national and local) that the typical percentage of trail users are hikers.
 - Trail amenity costs are defined for the entire 316 miles of trail implementation.
 - Maintenance and operation costs were defined as a separate item since it is not a capital expenditure but rather an annual cost that changes depending on the number of trail miles needing to be maintained.

A summary of the basic trail implementation costs for each concept is identified in Table 5-4 below. The trail implementation cost consists of three elements: Acquisition Cost, Development or Construction Cost, and Trail Amenity Cost (See Appendix W for a full breakdown of the cost assumptions for trail development). Both concepts provide the annual cost of a twenty-year Trail Program based on 2001 dollars.

Concept 1, the higher yearly cost of the two Trail Program Concepts, assumes the trails will be located on both private and public lands. The higher cost of Concept 1 is primarily associated with the assumed land acquisition cost. This concept anticipates that 40% of the land for trails would have to be acquired while 60% would be within public lands or received through gift or mandatory dedication.

Concept 2, the lower yearly cost of the two concepts assumes that all trails are on public lands. These lands would include public rights-of-way, parks, open space preserves. No acquisition cost would be required.

Table 5-4
Trail Implementation Cost

Strategic Trail Concept	Cost Projections	
	Annual Cost*	
	Low Single use	High Multi-use
Concept 1 – New Program - Trails on Public and Private Lands	\$3.5M	\$3.9M
Concept 2 – New Program - Trails on Public Lands Only	\$0.9M	\$1.3M

*These costs do not include maintenance and operations for either Concept.
See Table 5-5 and 5-6 for Total Program Costs.

Trail Implementation Cost Analysis

Although there are obvious and significant cost differences between the two concepts, each has benefits. While the annual implementation costs for Concept 1 are higher than Concept 2 it provides the County with a wider range of opportunities for a quality trail system as identified in Table 5-3. Concept 2 would cost less to implement, however this concept would primarily limit the Trail Program to public lands, which are limited in the more urbanized communities. This could result in placement of the majority of the trails within public rights-of-way. These trail types, located next to roads, would be more on the order of pathways and would provide a vastly different and diminished experience for trail users. Another benefit, besides cost, that Concept 2 presents is avoiding the issue of acquiring private lands for a trail system. This has in the past been a topic that has kept the Trail Program from being able to move forward. In the final analysis, Concept 1 would provide the County with a Trail Program that would meet the future needs, provide a variety of experiences, and allow the flexibility for trail connectivity that would lead to a successful trail system.

Trail Operation and Maintenance Cost

The cost of trail operation and maintenance includes a variety of functions to complete routine maintenance, repairs and emergency services. Paid County staff required to fulfill these functions include a Trail Manager, maintenance crew, clerical staff, and in some cases trail enforcement personnel. In addition, these personnel costs have an average 20% overhead expense. Other costs include trail maintenance supplies, insurance, and special programs, all of which have an average 15% overhead expense added. As indicated in Chapter 4.2 Trail Costs and illustrated in Table 4-2, the average cost of operation and maintenance for new trails equates to approximately \$2,900/mile/year. Table 5-5 identifies the estimated Trail Operation and Maintenance Costs (in 2001) dollars for new county trail construction over 20 years, assuming the addition of 15.8

miles per year for a total of 316 miles of new trail. As identified in Table 5-5 the cost associated with trail operation and maintenance will increase yearly based on the addition of new trails being added to the Trail Program.

Trail Program Cost

Concept 1 - The estimated total annual Trail Program cost for Concept 1 (in 2001 dollars) include both the Trail Implementation Cost and Trail Maintenance cost for the “High” range and is shown in Table 5-5. To determine the “Low” annual cost of this concept subtract \$400,000 from the Annual Trail Program Cost total column

Concept 2 - The estimated total annual Trail Program cost for Concept 2 (in 2001 dollars) include both the Trail Implementation Cost and Trail Maintenance cost for the “High” range and is shown in Table 5-6. To determine the “Low” annual cost subtract \$400,000 from the Annual Trail Program Cost identified in the total column

It should be understood that both of these estimates are based on providing approximately 16 miles of trails a year and the information regarding the trail needs known at this time. Implementing 16 miles of trails on an annual basis may be an aggressive implementation schedule that may be hard to accomplish. However, as the Trail Program is prepared and general trail alignments are selected and refined, the trail implementation schedule may change reflecting a Trail Program cost different than what is illustrated in Tables 5.5 and 5-6.

5.6.2 Regional Trails

It is anticipated that the majority of the candidate Regional Trails will be shared facilities with multi-jurisdictional authority. These types of trails may include such agencies as the County, City(s), State, and Federal Governments and require joint power authorities or formalized memorandums of agreement. It is anticipated that in order to complete the Regional Trail System a significant amount of regional trails would be on public lands and the use of private lands would be limited. The County’s proposed contribution and participation to a Regional Trail Program is unknown at this time, therefore trail development costs and other associated costs such as maintenance and operation cannot be identified until more specific plans are prepared.

Table 5-5
Concept 1 Annual Trail Program Cost – High Range
(Annual Operations/Maintenance plus Trail Implementation Cost)

Year	Miles of Trail	Annual Trail Maintenance Cost	Annual Trail Implementation Cost	Annual Trail Program Cost*
1	15.8	\$45,820	\$3,868,000	\$3,913,820
2	31.6	\$91,640	\$3,868,000	\$3,959,640
3	47.4	\$137,460	\$3,868,000	\$4,005,460
4	63.2	\$183,280	\$3,868,000	\$4,051,280
5	79.0	\$229,100	\$3,868,000	\$4,097,100
6	94.8	\$274,920	\$3,868,000	\$4,142,920
7	110.6	\$320,740	\$3,868,000	\$4,188,740
8	126.4	\$366,560	\$3,868,000	\$4,234,560
9	142.2	\$412,380	\$3,868,000	\$4,280,380
10	158.0	\$458,200	\$3,868,000	\$4,326,200
11	173.8	\$504,020	\$3,868,000	\$4,372,020
12	189.6	\$549,840	\$3,868,000	\$4,417,840
13	205.4	\$595,660	\$3,868,000	\$4,463,660
14	221.2	\$641,480	\$3,868,000	\$4,509,480
15	237.0	\$687,300	\$3,868,000	\$4,555,300
16	252.8	\$733,120	\$3,868,000	\$4,601,120
17	268.6	\$778,940	\$3,868,000	\$4,646,940
18	284.4	\$824,760	\$3,868,000	\$4,692,760
19	300.2	\$870,580	\$3,868,000	\$4,738,580
20	316.0	\$916,400	\$3,868,000	\$4,784,400

Note:

- 1) Capital expenditures for implementation are assumed to be at the “High” range of Concept 1 of approximately \$4 million per year for a 20-year period.
- 2) Maintenance and operations cost per mile are 2,900 per mile per section 4.2 and cost for personnel
- 3) All costs are shown in 2001 dollars.

Table 5-6
Concept 2 Annual Trail Program Cost – High Range
(Annual Operations/Maintenance plus Trail Implementation Cost)

Year	Miles of Trail	Annual Trail Maintenance Cost	Annual Trail Implementation Cost	Annual Trail Program Cost*
1	15.8	\$45,820	\$1,328,358	\$1,374,178
2	31.6	\$91,640	\$1,328,358	\$1,419,998
3	47.4	\$137,460	\$1,328,358	\$1,465,818
4	63.2	\$183,280	\$1,328,358	\$1,511,638
5	79.0	\$229,100	\$1,328,358	\$1,557,458
6	94.8	\$274,920	\$1,328,358	\$1,603,278
7	110.6	\$320,740	\$1,328,358	\$1,649,098
8	126.4	\$366,560	\$1,328,358	\$1,694,918
9	142.2	\$412,380	\$1,328,358	\$1,740,738
10	158.0	\$458,200	\$1,328,358	\$1,786,558
11	173.8	\$504,020	\$1,328,358	\$1,832,378
12	189.6	\$549,840	\$1,328,358	\$1,878,198
13	205.4	\$595,660	\$1,328,358	\$1,924,018
14	221.2	\$641,480	\$1,328,358	\$1,969,838
15	237.0	\$687,300	\$1,328,358	\$2,015,658
16	252.8	\$733,120	\$1,328,358	\$2,061,478
17	268.6	\$778,940	\$1,328,358	\$2,107,298
18	284.4	\$824,760	\$1,328,358	\$2,153,118
19	300.2	\$870,580	\$1,328,358	\$2,198,938
20	316.0	\$916,400	\$1,328,358	\$2,244,758

Note:

- 1) Capital expenditures for implementation are assumed to be at the “High” range of Concept 2 of approximately \$1.3million per year for a 20-year period.
- 2) Maintenance and operations cost per mile are 2,900 per mile per section 4.2 and cost for personnel.
- 3) All costs are in 2001 dollars.

5.7 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

This section discusses the approaches that are available to obtain environmental clearance for either of the proposed concepts in order to comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). These approaches will depend on the type of planning document that the County would use to implement the proposed Trail Program.

The County could decide to prepare a Trail Program as part of the Public Facilities Element of the County General Plan 2020 Update, a Trail Master Plan addressing Regional Trails, and/or a Trail Master Plan addressing Community/Subregional level trails. Depending on the type of planning document processed, the environmental processing of this project could be conducted through a programmatic approach or on a more site-specific trail segment-by-segment basis.

The County will be preparing an EIR as part of the General Plan 2020 Update. Should the County decide to prepare a Trail Program as part of the Public Facilities Element of the General Plan 2020 Update, the General Plan 2020 Update EIR would need to address the potential environmental consequences of implementation of the proposed Trail Program. The environmental analysis included in this type of an EIR would be more programmatic in nature; thus, a Programmatic EIR would be processed. It would include specific environmental analysis of proposed project features where known and would provide an overview analysis of project features on a conceptual level. Once the Programmatic EIR was certified, all immediate trail improvement components could be constructed and future components would be approved on a more conceptual basis. As the future components are better defined, they could be constructed upon completion of subsequent environmental documentation that would be tiered from the Programmatic EIR. The subsequent documentation could require preparation of addenda, supplemental, or subsequent EIRs.

Another approach for the environmental processing could be provided in two steps. The first step would be a Trail Master Plan addressing only Regional Trails. This would involve the preparation of a Master Plan EIR. This type of EIR would be similar to the programmatic EIR discussed above in that it would address specific environmental issues of the Regional Trail Plan where known and it would provide an overview analysis on more conceptual trail elements. As the future components are better defined, they could be addressed in subsequent environmental documentation that would be tiered from the Master Plan EIR. These future components could include the location of individual trail segments that are not known or are not funded at the time of the preparation of the EIR.

The second step would involve the environmental processing of a Trail Master Plan addressing Community Trails. Under this scheme, all Community Trail Maps would be analyzed within this

separate Master Plan EIR. This environmental document would address all components of proposed Community Trail Plans submitted by each community and would provide an overview analysis of project features on a conceptual level. If future Community Trail Maps or elements are provided they could be addressed in subsequent environmental documentation that would be tiered from the Master Plan EIR. These future plans and elements could include the location of individual trail segments that are not known or funded at the time of initial EIR preparation. Upon certification of the Master Plan EIR, those Community Trail Plan elements addressed in the EIR could be fully implemented.

If there is federal funding or if a federal action is required, such as establishment of a trail on federal lands, the project would need to comply with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). As with the CEQA process, the NEPA process involves three key phases as set forth in the NEPA guidelines (40 CFR Sections 1500-1508). The first step requires the lead agency to determine whether NEPA applies to the proposed action and if Categorical Exclusions can be used for the project. During this step, the agency must determine whether the action is categorically excluded or otherwise exempt from NEPA.

If the action is not categorically excluded, the agencies' second step is to determine whether the proposed action may significantly affect the quality of the human environment. This step generally requires preparing an environmental assessment (EA), leading to a Finding Of No Significant Impact (FONSI). A FONSI is prepared if the agency determines that no significant effects would occur from the proposed action. During the third phase of the NEPA process, the federal agency prepares an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). An EIS is prepared if the agency determines that the proposed action may have significant effects on the human environment. The process of an EIS under NEPA is generally similar to that of an EIR under CEQA. Should the proposed action require the preparation of an EIR and EIS a joint EIR/EIS should be prepared and processed concurrently.

5.7.1 Preferred Approach

The preferred environmental approach for either of the concepts proposed is dependent upon several factors, including, but not limited to, the type of planning document to be processed, timing of project funding, and project scheduling. With all factors being equal, the preferred environmental approach would be the preparation of one master Trail Program EIR. This document would include both the Regional Trail Plan and the Community Trail Master Plan and provide the County with the most flexibility in proceeding with the overall Trail Program. This document could be processed independently of the General Plan 2020 Update EIR, thereby avoiding potential delays occurring with other general plan update issues. The master Trail Program EIR would focus specifically on the specific elements of the County's Trail Program. It would also have the flexibility to thoroughly address trail components that are well defined while providing a programmatic analysis of less defined trail components at a conceptual level.

This page intentionally left blank